

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION

TEL: 880-2-883-7150-4

FAX: 880-2-9881677, 9885688

E-MAIL: DhakaPA@state.gov

WEBSITE: <http://dhaka.usembassy.gov>



SPEECH BY AMBASSADOR JAMES F. MORIARTY AT LIBERATION WAR MUSEUM

DHAKA, JUNE 10 -- U.S. Ambassador James F. Moriarty made the following remarks at the Liberation War Museum in Dhaka today:

(Begin Text)

Honorable freedom fighters and trustees of the museum, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen: Assalaam Waleikum and good evening.

It is with great pleasure that I visit you here at the Liberation War Museum; I join you in paying tribute to those who sacrificed their lives for the independence of Bangladesh.

I am honored to have the opportunity to also meet with those who fought for the cause of independence. As a newcomer to your country, I am eager to learn about the rich history, culture and language of the Bangladeshi people. Bangladesh is a unique country with proud traditions.

The Liberation War Museum is a sacred space which embodies the story of 1971 and depicts the turning point in history for Bangladesh.

It is important for future generations to understand Bangladesh's heritage and draw inspiration and pride from it in order to build a better future. This museum is a repository of knowledge and represents a significant piece of every Bangladeshi's identity. It is a site of deposited memories and serves as a catalyst for ongoing discussions.

The U.S. supports the conservation of history; As a friend of Bangladesh, the United States has provided funding through the Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation to the Museum.

You have hosted previous Ambassadorial visits, provided tours to other prominent U.S. Government visitors, and you are allowing me to share this occasion with you here today. Through a partnership between the Liberation War Museum and the

North Carolina Center for South Asian Studies, efforts are being made to promote the heritage of Bangladesh and educate the current and future generations about the hard-earned freedom of the nation. Archiving the Liberation War documents will ensure that the next generations of Bangladeshis will have access to what happened in 1971.

I recently finished reading *The Cruel Birth of Bangladesh: Memoirs of an American Diplomat*, and it is particularly moving for me to pay tribute to the memory of Archer K. Blood — my forefather and spiritual predecessor. He and his colleagues at the U.S. Consulate General in Dhaka called upon the United States Government to recognize the inalienable right of the people of Bangladesh to their independence. They, and many of my fellow American citizens, were among the earliest supporters of your new nation. I am certain they would be proud to see how the relationship between our two countries has matured over the years.

This is a critical time for Bangladesh, the world is watching, waiting and hoping that Bangladesh will emerge as a stable democracy. In looking ahead, I challenge you to set aside partisanship and work together for the greater good of Bangladesh and the future of her people - - as you did in 1971. If the spirit of cooperation can be revived, you will undoubtedly accomplish great things. Freedom is what you fought for, and freedom is a vital component of democracy. The upcoming election is an opportunity to reconcile your differences and honor those men and women who sacrificed their lives for Bangladesh.

Thank you.

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** As prepared for delivery*

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